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ABSTRACT

The issues of teacher training and what it takes to be a "compleat professor" are addressed. Faculty members find themselves trapped in the value system of the profession, knowing that status is gained through scholarly productivity, wanting to gain satisfaction from teaching but unprepared for its demands and buffeted by the changes in the national political and social agenda. In the university, concerns about teaching are generally regarded as the second-best preoccupation of those who have not been successful in the world of scholarship. The compleat professor must be a productive scholar in a discipline and must have knowledge of different learning styles. If the old-style compleat professor is set in his ways, the compleat professor, jr. may still be educable. Very few universities offer course-length instruction in teaching issues, but programs at Stanford, Harvard, Cornell, Iowa State, University of Washington, Syracuse, University of Massachusetts and University of Chicago are noted. The Center for the Advancement of College Teaching at Brown University employs various means to prepare teaching assistants (TAs) for enriched careers as compleat professors. They include the following: graduate students should observe faculty from different disciplines who were chosen for their success as teachers and scholars; the compleat professor jr. should discuss with a range of faculty the forces shaping the content of each course of study; faculty with international scholarly reputations should illustrate the role that scholarship has played in their success; and undergraduates should talk with TAs about what they value in a teacher. (SM)

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by Harriet W. Sheridan

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The Compleat Professor, Jr.

Training teachers in a world where teaching takes a back seat to scholarship.

by Harriet W. Sheridan

Although it is certainly not a new phenomenon, the barrage of criticism aimed at colleges during these past few years has been commanding in its ferocity. Both within and without, from the political extremes of Bloom and Bennett to the rational therapies of the NIE report and Boyer's *College*, faculties have found themselves in the role of Aesop's father, who at the advice of successive passersby first drove his donkey before him, then rode the donkey, then got off to let his son ride, then climbed on to join his son, and finally carried the donkey to market.

Trapped in the value system of the profession, knowing that status is gained entirely through scholarly productivity, wanting to gain satisfaction from teaching but unprepared for its demands, and buffeted by the changes in the national political and social agenda, faculty are tempted to look wistfully backwards to the golden age that never was, when everyone, like Mr. Bennett, knew exactly what and how to teach.

In the university, concerns about teaching are generally regarded as the second-best preoccupation of those who have not been successful in the world of scholarship. Find the most successful nontenured teacher on a campus, the one who has received the student award for teaching, and you will find someone whose days are numbered there.

Yet, when the tenure point is reached, the compleat professor is expected to have done only somewhat less well as a teacher than as a scholar, and, much less well though still well enough as a contributor to the in-house community.

The measure of scholarship is more reliable, we are told, much less subjective than teaching. If five or six specialists in a field report about the specialized scholarship of a tenure-candidate, after any antagonists have been identified and discounted, the judgment can be construed as objective and therefore sound. But when hundreds of undergraduates—and alumni—report enthusiastically about a candidate's teaching, this is read as the product of unstable tastes and specious popular appeal.

Concerns about teaching are generally regarded as the second-best preoccupation of those who have not been successful in the world of scholarship.

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Izaak Walton knew well what he meant by the compleat angler. The current definition of the compleat professor, an angler of sorts, awaits the formal doing, though the lineaments are generally clear. Start with someone who is familiar with the technology of teaching, who has learned through trial and error about the techniques of lecturing, maybe less well prepared to stimulate profitable discussions, but joyously enters into the calibrations of grading systems.

This compleat professor must, of course, be a productive scholar in a discipline. Scholarship that derives from interest in the learning process is regarded as déclassé except for faculty in education departments. The connection between scholarship and teaching is described as a flow from the former to the latter, whereby the intellectual vitality stimulated by scholarly research is seen to extend into a teaching performance to render it less lackluster and routine. Occasionally, this compleat professor may be heard to observe that teaching novice students might also stimulate scholarly research.

Other responsibilities, such as serving as advisor to freshman or graduate students or as treasurer of the sherry fund, to which may also be added committee work and public service, represent an unpre-

dictably sized portion of the compleat professor's role. Home, family, and squash fill in the rest.

However, expanding this typical portrait are and should be some newly developed attributes. Considered critical, now, is knowledge of differences in learning styles, for such knowledge should produce a professor who is sensitive to the distinctive ways in which individuals think, a professor who composes lectures and initiates discussions that reach into the crannies of students' competencies rather than delivers lessons that march down the center of the highway of some imagined average learner.

The spokesperson for the development of the teaching dimension of the compleat professor's professional life was Joseph Katz, author of the book *Turning Professors Into Teachers*. [See the article beginning on page 12.—Eds.]. Dr. Katz urged faculty to recognize that the thinking of students often differs from that of faculty.

He argued that faculty can use the *Omnibus Personality Inventory* to be guided in the determination of whether any one student or group of students is making use of the kind of thinking that is critical for the discipline. Teachers can thereby "be helped more consciously to explore and test with their students, by way of interviews, classroom observations, written papers, and exams, how students are thinking, what processes they may be using, and what processes they may be ignoring and leaving unused."

In his presentation at the 1988 AAHE National Conference, Dr. Katz observed that for faculty to learn how to teach students requires a major amount of time and effort. Not only do faculty need a more sophisticated knowledge about how students learn but they themselves must learn "mentoring" and observing skills. The reeducation of the old-style compleat professor is dependent on regular peer observation, on continual extensive interviewing of students in a course by both its Teacher and its Observer, and on monthly team discussions between the two.

Were this remarkably sensitive and elaborate plan of action to be adopted, a new model of the definition of the compleat professor would surely emerge—one that would include specific knowledge of how students learn and the necessary pragmatic skills to apply this knowledge. The new professor would also be willing to reevaluate priorities, even if accomplishing students' successful learning might mean jettisoning "coverage" and displacing the lecture.

Clearly, admitting a faculty observer to the classroom will call for a revised professional psychology, one of collaboration in which an open door invites colleagues to observe, and the useless final class evaluation is replaced by periodic inquiries about how the course is helping or hindering each student's learning. Replacing research teams with teaching teams, regarding teaching as an intellectual enterprise worthy of its own investigation, "turning every faculty member into his own Bill Perry," are what Joe Katz—and Pat Cross—have been propounding.

As Joe was quick to acknowledge, the greatest obstacle to this proposed change in the attitudes and practices of the professoriate is "for faculty to have enough time to do it." Obviously, turning professors into teachers by the method Dr. Katz proposed will be slow going—biases to overcome, priorities to change, new lessons to learn.

But beyond this, and far less susceptible to change are the conventions and standards by which the professoriate governs itself. Changing these, moving successful teaching—which depends for its success on intellectual vitality and curiosity and has for its product generations of educated, self-confident citizens—to equality with scholarship will be the work of generations. True, a few campuses do include distinguished teaching professors or have awards for good teaching, but the dominant social group is unequivocally the company of scholars.

> How else can we bring about change if not by educating the graduate students, before they have been chilled into the mold and their socialization to the standard value system rigidly set?

How else, besides the slow reeducating of the tenured faculty, can we bring about change if not by educating the future professoriate, the graduate students, before they have been chilled into the mold and their socialization to the standard value system rigidly set?

The very structure of their education is sufficient to socialize graduate students firmly into the professoriate's class system. Their first task, after passing the required courses, is to demonstrate research skills and scholarly competency by completing a dissertation. The courses, which range across a field, are supposed to prepare the novices to teach the undergraduate disciplinary curriculum. Yet, their first tenure-track appointment is likely to depend on the area of specialization confirmed by the dissertation.

The pattern is clearly marked—from general knowledge of a field to a specialized research area more readily susceptible to a professional career of scholarly productivity.

Early in their graduate careers, students catch on to the professional attitude: one "TAs" in order to earn a meager stipend in order

to continue with research. The contempt of department chairs for teaching is expressed in no clearer way than by those who willingly assign to quasi-teaching roles international students with only a bare command of the English language and even less knowledge of the culture of the American classroom.

What lies beyond polemic is the development of newly conceived systems to compete for the soul of the future professoriate. If the old-style compleat professor is pretty well set in his or her ways, the compleat professor, Jr., may still be educable.

The education of Junior begins with the short-range objective: getting the TA ready for the campus classroom. Thus, preparation in the technology of teaching is assumed to be an institutional function in many universities, a departmental function in others. Offices of instructional development, centers for teaching and learning, and so on become the agents by which such instrumental knowledge is provided for all who seek it. Only a few universities require of their graduate students course-length instruction in teaching issues, and even fewer offer the courses for credit.

Most of these centers have some affiliation with departments of education or with centers for the study of higher education; others may be presided over by professorial directors but are typically run by administrative appointees. The latter is the case with the Danforth Center at **Stanford,** and is currently so at the **Harvard** Danforth Center since the resignation of long-term director Dean Whitla. In many cases, however, departments serve as the locus of preparation, and professional development centers become ancillary providers of the technology.

At **Cornell,** a grant from the Exxon Foundation made possible arts and sciences departmental programs for TA training. The programs include four-to-six-week summer internships of observation and practice teaching; orientation to the department's faculty and research, its undergraduate curriculum, and its facilities; discussions about the goals and organization of the courses the TAs will be part of; "practical pedagogy"; and observation and videotaping of their classrooms by faculty supervisors or trained senior TAs.

The more common model, however, is a brief one-week summer program in which "emphasis is on the practical," with continuing support and training during the first semester of the year, according to Lynne S. Abel, associate dean.

Characteristically, centers get right down to the business of retrofitting faculty for teaching, and graduate students for their initiation into practical techniques. As a result of most centers' emphasis on practical short-range preparation, the compleat technologists learn about phrasing questions; writing exams; lecturing; starting and ending each class effectively; encouraging quiet learners and quieting the verbose; using different techniques to reach students of different levels of capability; designing assignments and responding to student writing; providing small/large-group instruction; using transparencies, simple demonstrations, computers and word processors; handling controversial issues in the classroom; dealing with disruptive behavior; and so forth. Or they should.

Only a few universities require of their graduate students course-length instruction in teaching issues, and even fewer offer the courses for credit.

The Teaching Assistant Orientation Seminar at **Iowa State University,** for example, includes a heavy dose of practical ways "to be an effective teacher—right now. (Theory is brought in if it has a direct application.)"

The Center for Instructional Development and Research at the **University of Washington,** under the direction of Jody D. Nyquist, functions as a central resource clearinghouse for instructional problems; provides instructional consultation and access to educational materials, equipment, and services; and offers "comprehensive support for the teaching aspects of a scholar's life at the University."

It also distributes (for $250) a useful videotape on the role of the graduate teaching assistant. Like many others, the university adheres to a discipline-specific approach, lodging major responsibility for TA training with departments.

A moving force for the "cost-effective" organization of university centers for TA training is the two-year-old Center for Instructional Development at **Syracuse University,** directed by Robert M. Diamond, professor of instructional design, development, and evaluation and higher education. The Syracuse center, sponsor of the National Workshop on the Design and Evaluation of an Orientation and Training Program for Teaching Assistants, includes amongst the more familiar topics a section on course and curriculum design, thereby opening the window for consideration of the future responsibilities of a tenured compleat professor.

The Danforth Center at **Stanford,** under the direction of Michele Marincovich, provides the usual services, including an impressive set of videotapes on teaching subjects made by talented Stanford faculty. In 1979, the center initiated a TA/TA consultation

program, which was inspired by the **University of Massachusetts/ Amherst** Clinic to Improve University Teaching.

The Stanford program trains a groups of TAs known for their instructional skills to act as teaching consultants to other TAs both within and without their own departments. TAs who seek a videotaping of their teaching voluntarily agree to review the tape with a TA trained in consultation, rather than with a center staff member. Most TAs agreeing to the consultant ask for one from a closely allied field, rather than one from their own department.

In the process of their training, through hours spent together discussing teaching, the TA consultants become "a highly cohesive and articulate group of advocates for good TAing on campus," according to Michele Fisher in "A TA/TA Consultation Program: The Unanticipated Benefits" (*Contributed Papers*, Sixth International Conference on Improving University Teaching, 1980, Lausanne, Switzerland, pp. 55-61). Yet as important as this development is, the TAs' discovery of the value of sharing interests with colleagues from other disciplines must be considered a major benefit.

The working association of TAs from different fields characterizes a program at the **University of Chicago** carried on in cooperation with forty Midwest liberal arts colleges. According to Allen Sanderson, associate provost, The Chicago Teaching Program provides workshops on "practical issues" and the Chicago Conversations on Teaching, which are informal seminars where members of the Chicago faculty discuss topics that "question, challenge, or explore prevailing pedagogical assumptions and attitudes."

The program also includes a two-part forum, consisting of small-group sessions for lecturers or graduate students with full responsibility for a section or a course, on "practical and conceptual problems of teaching," including course design and the development of "critical perspectives on emerging teaching styles."

In another, very interesting program that erodes disciplinary barriers, directed by professors Joseph Williams and Gregory Colomb, graduate students are trained in the teaching of writing and placed in internships with faculty in the Chicago college program who are teaching freshman classes, and in advanced courses in disciplines. Although the writing TAs are chiefly graduate students in English, they are not exclusively so, according to professor Wayne Booth.

Some of the most experienced faculty at **Harvard** have been videotaped in a professional training series that began in 1976 as a result of a Danforth Foundation grant. (According to Jane B. Phipps, office coordinator, the technical quality of these tapes varies greatly.) Harvard's Danforth Center for Teaching and Learning provides consultations, workshops, and panel discussions on teaching to all faculty and teaching fellows in the college and the graduate school.

It has published a selection of lectures on teaching in *The Art and Craft of Teaching* (edited by M. M. Gullette, Cambridge, 1982), which has been widely used by other such centers. The value of these lectures is augmented by the professorial status and scholarly repute of many of the speakers.

The Danforth Center also sponsors an invitational seminar on developing discussion-leadership skills, under the direction of C. Roland Christensen, the Robert Walmsley University Professor in the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. Designed primarily for graduate assistants and a mix of junior and senior faculty, the seminar provides a creative application of the case method to the development of not only discussion-leading skills but much more beyond that.

As one participant has written, "it gives faculty members a forum in which to discuss their craft and gives them a vocabulary with which to do it. . . . I relished the opportunity to gather with committed teachers, to share common challenges, to learn from colleagues in different professional schools, and to experiment with case-based exercises in problem solving." As a recent participant in the seminar, I was impressed with its technique—a meticulous pursuit of the details of diverse opinions analyzing a practical teaching problem. (The seminar's work is exhibited in Christensen's text, *Teaching and the Case Method*, Boston, 1981.)

A moving force for the "cost-effective" organization of university centers for TA training is the two-year-old Center for Instructional Development at Syracuse University.

What do graduate students want as part of their TA preparation? Students were asked to comment on a four-day preparatory institute sponsored at the end of last August by the new Center for the Advancement of College Teaching here at **Brown University,** which included discussion of many of the familiar technological issues.

They replied that they would like more information about gender and racial differences as these affect learning; professional behavior that avoids sexism or racism; dealing with students with psychological problems; self-evaluation

techniques, especially at mid term; the multiplicity of personal teaching styles; establishing support networks both within and across disciplines to bolster TAs' self-esteem and to go about assuring faculty that they are worthy, if novice, comrades; developing a sense of interdisciplinary community; and dealing with endemic graduate student anxiety.

The preparatory institute was composed of ten novice graduate TAs nominated by their departments and four experienced TAs, each of whom undertook to serve the clusters of departments relevant to his or her discipline. The institute was designed with the long-range objective of placing fourteen trained TAs as resource agents with the various departments, thereby expanding the reach of the Center itself.

The Center asked itself what means might achieve the objectives of preparing TAs not only in the technology necessary for the short-run of service in the Brown undergraduate classroom, but also for their enriched careers as compleat professors on the campuses of this country. It arrived at the following conclusions about the programs it will sponsor:

- In order to strengthen the perception of teaching as a subtle art commanding a full response of intellectual skills, not merely pragmatic routines, graduate students should observe faculty from different disciplines who were chosen for their success as teachers and scholars; actually teach before them; and offer observations on the forces affecting their characteristic choice of the materials and the methods adopted for the circumstances.

  The faculty presenters should discuss issues such as their assumptions about the level and motivation of the students; the choice and balance of objectives such as the acquisition of knowledge, improvement of skills, development of intellectual and scholarly faculties, and maturation of other personal attributes; reasons for preferring certain teaching techniques over others; and so on.

  Many experienced teachers have developed their styles imitatively, modeling themselves on a good teacher (or teachers) they met in the course of their careers as students; others may have developed an "antistyle," the result of a resolution not to teach in unproductive ways they themselves had suffered; still others may have taken on a style (or styles) eclectically or intuitively. Consequently, faculty involved in the Center series entitled "On the Development of a Teaching Style" should be chosen for the diversity of their teaching styles and their articulateness in defining these.

- Although no issue more engages the fierce combative skills of the compleat professor than a debate about undergraduate curricular degree requirements, unless it be about the grading system, the Center intends to focus on the origins of disciplinary species. In order to enlarge the perception of future professional life, the compleat professor, Jr., should discuss with a range of faculty the forces shaping the content of each course of study, and the role individual faculty may play within their disciplines and on the campus at large, to determine what shall be taught and how and when it shall be taught.

  Why, for example, has it taken so long for women's history or psychology to find a place in departmentalized studies? How, for example, has the lineage of transmitted perspective or bias impeded perceptions of the contributions to American society of racial and ethnic minorities? A series on the epistemology of undergraduate curricula, or the role of tradition and the individual talent in deciding on a department's or a college's course offerings (paintings but not pottery? "theater arts" but not dance? literature, but composition only at arm's length?), will become part of the Center's program.

- Since one of the truths of the professorial world is that one cannot be a good teacher unless one is also a good scholar, the Center will invite faculty to examine the connection between the two. It will ask faculty with international scholarly reputations to illustrate the role that scholarship has played in their success as good teachers, and it will invite senior lecturers who populate the corridors of composition and foreign language programs to explain if—and how—they keep themselves intellectually alive.

- The Center will invite undergraduates to meet with graduate TAs to talk about what they value in a teacher. It will encourage the use of trained undergraduate as well as graduate observers in the TA classroom at the invitation of the TA.

In all its activities, in informal buffets following each formal presentation, in invitations to attend plenary sessions to all segments of the campus, the Center will encourage the reduction of hierarchical distinctions and artificial barriers—the teacher and the taught, the compleat professor and the TA, the chemist and the philosopher.

It will aim for the growth of the community of the campus and for the enlarged vision of the teacher-scholar compleat professor of the future. ■

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